

Media, PA –The United States Postal Service (USPS) has announced that, in response to efforts of Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07), it will mail surveys asking people living in Garnet Valley to vote whether they do want their own zip code. While this does not necessarily mean the zip code change will be approved, it is a necessary step to such approval and comes about after correspondence and discussion with the Post Master General and his staff. This vote comes as a result of extensive advocacy on behalf of these residents by Congressman Sestak (PA-07) as many of his Garnet Valley constituents have raised concerns about postal issues and asked for a new zip code as part of the solution. As various news outlets, including the Delaware County Daily Times, have reported, the Congressman has met with residents to address mail problems in Garnet Valley. Since taking office a year and a half ago, the Congressman has remained engaged with constituents through multiple town halls and written correspondences, and has participated in more than a dozen discussions with postal officials. — “Throughout this process, I have been mindful that the current Postmaster General has set an objective of finding ways to say yes, not excuses for saying no,” said Congressman Sestak. “As a representative of the people in my District, it is my job to effectively communicate their concerns through the correct channels and ensure that they are appropriately addressed. I am pleased that the issues raised regarding efficiency in mail delivery as a result of constituent concerns about service have given the Postal Service a reason to say yes to this zip code survey.”

New zip codes are rarely issued and an area must meet specific criteria to receive one. In his communications with constituents on this issue, the Congressman has stressed that USPS is not federally funded and uses costs to make decisions just as any private business would. Through extensive research into USPS procedures, a process has been found by which a new zip code might be created for Garnet Valley at minimal expense. This survey is a significant step in the possible creation of a new zip code and will show whether the people of Garnet Valley as a whole want their zip code changed. The low cost of this process is especially important in light of the many financial strains the Post Service faces from rising fuel to healthcare costs. In addition, the number of first class mail drops is decreasing yearly, while the total number of locations USPS serves is increasing. These realities have, in part, led to the agency's \$5.3 billion shortfall.

Bethel and Concord Townships, both of which include a portion of Garnet Valley, have experienced significant growth in the past decade, 52 percent and 38 percent respectively, and residents have reported to Congressman Sestak that this factor, along with the 2005 fire that destroyed the Concordville Post Office, have contributed to an increase in postal-related problems. As a result, Congressman Sestak has worked with the Postal Service to address his constituents' concerns.

“Many constituents have brought postal issues to my attention and it is important not to accept

that nothing can be done about them," said Congressman Sestak. "This survey shows that while we must recognize USPS' challenges and keep in mind its mandate not to have a budget shortfall, there are often steps, such as in the case of Garnet Valley, that can be taken."

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.